



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
2011**

**Grade 4
Reading**

Reading

❶ Which word has the same **vowel sound** as mint?

- ☐ A. size
- ☐ B. rice
- ☐ C. night
- ☐ D. fifth

❷ The **opposite** of the word curved is

- ☐ A. loop.
- ☐ B. straight.
- ☐ C. cut.
- ☐ D. fancy.

George Washington Carver found new ways to use plants. Read this passage about George Washington Carver. Then answer the questions that follow.

George Washington Carver

George Washington Carver loved plants. As a boy, he was up early each morning, studying the plants that grew near his Missouri home.

By age ten, George knew more about plants than anyone else in his town. He knew so much that the townspeople called him the plant doctor.

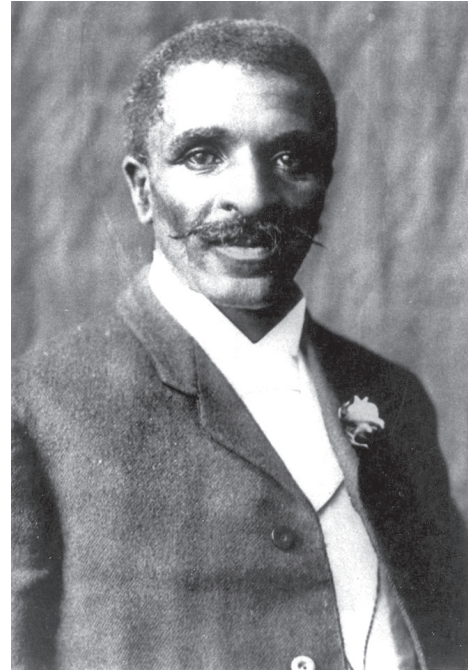
George's childhood was not easy. He was born a slave in 1864. Before he was one year old, both his parents had died. George's foster parents taught him to read and write, because no schools in the area would teach black children.

George was determined to get an education. When he was eleven, he moved to a town where he was able to go to school.

For the next 20 years, George studied hard. He felt that by learning about plants, he would be able to help other people.

At the time, farmers in the South were having a hard time. They had been planting crops like cotton that used up the rich part of the soil. Now the soil was not rich enough to grow healthy plants. Many people began losing their farms.

George worked hard to find ways that farmers could improve their soil. One way was to plant crops that could make the soil richer. Peanuts and sweet potatoes did this. But the farmers laughed at the idea of growing peanuts and sweet potatoes. They did not think that anyone would buy them.



Then George found that plants could be used for things other than food. Sweet potatoes could be used to make products like flour, candy, and shoe polish. Peanuts could be turned into soap, ink, and dye. Soon George developed over 300 products that could be made from peanuts.

9 Manufacturers were very excited when they found out about George's experiments. They wanted to make some of the products he had developed. Soon they began buying peanuts and sweet potatoes from Southern farmers.

Today farmers use George's discoveries to help make their soil richer. Manufacturers owe their thanks to him for many products he developed. George Washington Carver truly did help a great number of people.

- 3 When George Washington Carver was a boy, why was he called the “plant doctor”?
- ☐ A. He liked looking at plants near his home each morning.
 - ☐ B. He took care of the townspeople’s plants.
 - ☐ C. He knew more about plants than anyone else in town.
 - ☐ D. He grew plants near his home in Missouri.
- 4 Which sentence about George’s childhood is **true**?
- ☐ A. George never learned to read or write.
 - ☐ B. George wanted to become a farmer.
 - ☐ C. George did not like the town where he was born.
 - ☐ D. George moved to a town where he could go to school.

- 5 George studied hard for 20 years so he could
- ☐ A. become a cotton farmer on his own land.
 - ☐ B. make products from plants.
 - ☐ C. learn how to use plants to help people.
 - ☐ D. grow peanuts and sweet potatoes.
- 6 At first, Southern farmers thought that growing peanuts and sweet potatoes would
- ☐ A. kill their cotton plants.
 - ☐ B. earn them no money.
 - ☐ C. make their work harder.
 - ☐ D. use up the healthy soil.

7 Use the definitions below.

plant (noun): 1. a young tree, vine, or shrub
(verb): 2. to put in the ground for growth

Write your own sentences to show **each** meaning of the word plant. Use the word plant in each sentence.

1. _____

2. _____

Use the definitions below.

part (noun): 1. a piece of a whole
(verb): 2. to break into pieces or to comb hair to one side

Write your own sentences to show **each** meaning of the word part. Use the word part in each sentence.

1. _____

2. _____

8 George found that peanuts could be used to make

- ☐ A. flour.
- ☐ B. candy.
- ☐ C. soap.
- ☐ D. shoe polish.

9 In paragraph 9, the word manufacturers means people who

- ☐ A. make things.
- ☐ B. grow things.
- ☐ C. study things.
- ☐ D. discover things.

10 What is the **main idea** of this passage?

- ☐ A. George studied plants near his home.
- ☐ B. George was called the plant doctor.
- ☐ C. George learned how to read and write.
- ☐ D. George was able to help many people.

11 The word owe rhymes with

- ☐ A. know.
- ☐ B. own.
- ☐ C. town.
- ☐ D. how.

12 Explain how George helped Southern farmers. Use details from the passage.

Acknowledgments

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